

TREE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

*State of Texas Building, 401 E. Franklin, 5th Floor
Monday, March 14, 2005*

MEMBERS PRESENT:	OTHERS:	MEMBERS ABSENT:
Charlotte Johnson, Chair - Parks Board	Brent Pearson, Arborist - Street Department	Wynn Anderson, At Large
Oscar Mestas, Vice Chair - Texas Forest Service	Lupe Cuellar, Assistant City Attorney	John White, Arborist
Raymond Bader, West Texas Urban Forestry Council	Rosemary G. Borrego, Secretary - Street Dept.	One Vacancy
Dr. Tammy Bendele, Horticultural Background		
Eileen Karlsruher, At Large		

1. Meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

2. **Approval of Minutes –**

Motion by Eileen Karlsruher to approve the Minutes to the meeting of February 14, 2005, seconded by Dr. Tammy Bendele. Motion carried.

3. **New Appointments – Charlotte Johnson**

Charlotte Johnson introduced Mr. Raymond Bader, who was appointed by Representative Cushing to fill the position formerly held by Georgina Maldonado. Mrs. Johnson welcomed Mr. Bader to the Board.

4. **Memorial Tree – Parks Department / Brent Pearson**

Brent Pearson reported we now have a total of 20 memorial trees.

5. **Discussion and Action on the Annual Tree Board Report – Charlotte Johnson**

The Annual Tree Board Report was compiled by Charlotte Johnson and e-mailed to the Board members for their review and comments. A copy of the final report was given to all Board members.

Dr. Tammy Bendele made a motion that we accept the Tree Board's Annual Report as is; seconded by Eileen Karlsruher. All in favor. Charlotte Johnson and Eileen Karlsruher will hand deliver the report to the Mayor and Council members on Wednesday at 10 a.m.

6. **Discussion and Action on the Arbor Day Proclamation – Dr. Tammy Bendele**

Last year we observed an Arbor Week, and in the fall we had a Fall Arbor Day. Discussion followed as to whether to celebrate a day or a week of Arbor Day, the date to be held, and the location for the celebration. The Board agreed to hold Arbor Week from April 24 to April 30, and to hold the celebration on Sunday, April 24. Time and Location to be determined.

It was suggested by Charlotte Johnson that the sub-committee send a letter to the schools and give them information on Arbor Day week, so that possibly the schools would hold some sort of celebration on their own.

Dr. Tammy Bendele will submit the proclamation by this Friday, and she will be responsible for recruiting people and getting it together.

Mrs. Johnson stated that she looked at the Arbor Day web site and found that it is very generic and would like to put in photos of the arbor day celebrations, and photos of what we have done in the past and what's coming up. Brent will get the information together and will take to City Hall to update the site.

7. Update and Discussion on Approved Tree & Plant List – Brent Pearson

No applications for modifications submitted.

Mrs. Johnson stated that after she spoke to a garden club this week, she was told that there were several calls to the Parks Department asking for the Tree and Plant list. Brent Pearson spoke with Daisy at the Parks Department to ask her to have some extra lists printed out.

8. Update and Discussion on Adopt-a-Median – Brent Pearson

Brent Pearson stated they have not met since the last time, and he will schedule a meeting for next week when everyone is in town.

Charlotte Johnson stated that the City Attorney did some research on the landscape ordinance since the last meeting, and had sent her an e-mail with references to Adopt-a-Median that are contained currently in the proposed landscape ordinance. Her advise to the Board is that we need to proceed with our plans on the Adopt-a-Median Program.

Oscar Mestas stated he has not found a city in Texas that has Adopt-a-Median as an ordinance, just as a policy. If we did it in El Paso as an ordinance we would be the first city. It has been discussed several times to doing it as an ordinance or as a resolution. Lupe Cuellar does recommend that we simplify the program.

The original members of the sub-committee are: Oscar Mestas (Chair), Wynn Anderson, Dr. Tammy Bendele, with assistance from Kevin Elkins, Assistant City Attorney. Georgina Maldonado was working with the sub-committee, and Mrs. Johnson stated the Board needs to discuss her replacement. Charlotte Johnson has adjusted the timeline to September.

9. Update and Discussion on Tree Care Ordinance – Oscar Mestas

Oscar Mestas stated he had e-mailed everyone copies of the ordinance, which is a combination of several ordinances from different cities and adapted to El Paso. Right now a lot of the enforcement goes to the City Arborist (Brent Pearson). Ninety percent of it deals with public property. Few areas deal with insects or diseases that develop on private property where the City has the authority to control before it causes destruction. He explained that the ordinance now deals with fall webworm, where if somebody's tree in their yard has fall webworm and a neighbor complains the tree has to be sprayed. He would like to get rid of the section in the present ordinance that deals with the fall webworm. Lupe Cuellar stated it is possible to repeal the ordinance and address it in another way in the new ordinance, but that it does not necessarily mean that the new ordinance is going to take the place in that section of the code. Lupe Cuellar asked that Mr. Mestas let her know if he wants to do that so that she can make sure everything is coordinated.

Oscar Mestas will re-send the old ordinance to everyone. Dr. Bendele asked if they should hold a committee meeting, and Mr. Mestas said they can hold a short meeting to look at the ordinance and then send a new one out to everyone. He would like to get the tree ordinance passed before November to meet the application for Tree City USA. Charlotte Johnson stated that the timeline now calls for the final draft in June and then taking it to Council in July. Mr. Mestas replied that the timeline is still realistic.

Charlotte Johnson asked Mr. Ray Bader to serve on the Tree Care Ordinance sub-committee in place of Georgina Maldonado, who resigned from the Tree Board. Mr. Bader accepted.

10. Update and Discussion on Community Forestry Work Plan – Charlotte Johnson

Charlotte Johnson had no new information since the last meeting. The work plan was presented to the City Manager in January, and is included in the report to Council and Mayor. She stated that the Board has fulfilled its obligation and that it should now be passed on to the Parks or Street department.

Eileen Karlsruher suggested this should be included in the Parks Department's master plan, and that we should remind Dr. Merrifield that this is our 5-year plan of what we would like to be done. It is important that we give Dr. Merrifield the report early. Mrs. Johnson agreed. She has a cover letter ready to attach to the report. On Dr. Merrifield's letter she will add an additional paragraph addressing the 5-year plan.


11. OPEN COMMENT PERIOD

Brent Pearson announced that the West Texas Urban Forestry Council has paid their share in the amount of \$8,000 for a site shelter/education building for the Tree Farm. It will be seven weeks until delivery is taken. Brent Pearson stated they have planted 500 more seedlings at the farm.

Dr Tammy Bendele informed the Board that there is now a Texas Tree License plate that can be purchased at a cost of \$30, and \$22 of those would go to the West Texas Urban Forestry Council (state board). This is an annual cost.

12. Motion by Eileen Karlsruher to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Oscar Mestas. Meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Next general meeting will be Monday, April 11, 2005 at 3:30 p.m., same location.


Approved: Charlotte Johnson, Chairman

Date: 5/9/05

Rosemary G. Borrego, Secretary